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formed for theoretical purposes, is not necessarily identical with the conception of possibility which arises on the basis of volition. We have no right to treat the possibilities of will as if they were theoretical assertions. In the end we cannot explain will by any categories, except those which the volitional experience itself suggests. This was clearly seen by Sigwart, and I cannot do better than conclude by a quotation:⁹ "That alone is possible in the completely objective sense which is removed from the sphere of necessity as the manifestation of free subjects." And Sigwart goes on to point out that it is not a question of the metaphysical truth of this view, but of the presuppositions which lead to the thought of possibility in this sphere of experience. In other words, taking the volitional experience as it stands, it consists in the practical determination of the undetermined. And the practically undetermined is the possible in conduct.

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THE UNSATISFACTORINESS OF THE CLASSIFICATION OF DUTIES AND VIRTUES
IN MANY OF THE MODERN
TREATISES ON ETHICS.¹

In the early part of the classic "System of Logic," by John Stuart Mill, there is a striking criticism on the part of the author with regard to the list of the "Categories" in the form in which it had come down through the Middle Ages from Aristotle. He speaks of this as a "mere catalogue of the distinctions rudely marked out by the language of familiar life," and refers to it as being "both redundant and defective." "Some objects," as he says, "are omitted and others repeated several times under different headings. It is

⁹ "Logic," Eng. Transl., § 34, p. 203.

¹ The author of this article, the late Walter L. Sheldon, founder and lecturer of the Ethical Society of St. Louis, died June 5th, 1907. This is the last paper he prepared for publication.

like a division of animals into men, quadrupeds, horses, asses, and ponies.”²

It may be that Mill was rather severe in his animadversions. Whether students of logic at the present day would agree with him on this point, the writer of this article is not in a position to judge. But on the other hand, these comments do occur to the mind of the reader over and over when applying them in other directions. It is fair, at least, to raise the question whether similar strictures would not have a good deal of significance, for example, if they were passed upon many of the classifications of duties or virtues, that we find in treatises on ethics issued within the last generation. We cannot help thinking every now and then in this connection of that humorous suggestion of Mill as to the division of animals into “men, quadrupeds,” etc.

One would not like to say this as a reflection upon the ability or insight of the ethical philosophers of the last half century. On the contrary, some of these men have done as good and as original work as anything which has been done before them, back even perhaps to the time of Plato. At any rate, we feel safe in saying, without contradiction, that beginning with the work of Immanuel Kant in the closing part of the eighteenth century, greater results have been accomplished in ethical research since that time than in all the centuries intervening from the time of the Roman Empire.

We must all admit, however, that the advances made have not been equal in all directions. The insight which has been displayed may have been great or profound along one line and somewhat weak or lame along other lines. Ethical philosophy in its various sub-departments has not moved ahead evenly. Certain problems have proved far more interesting than others and called forth a much greater degree of earnest thinking. On the subject, for instance, of the origin of conscience, the work has been acute and far reaching. The scholar in Germany has reveled in discussing the

² J. S. Mill, “System of Logic.” Eighth edition. Book I, ch. III, par. 1.

theme "*Das Wesen und die Entstehung des Gewissens*,"³ and his colleagues in America and England have grappled with the same issue with a like fervor. More light has come on this phase of the whole ethical problem since the time of Darwin, than came perhaps in all the thousands of years before. The material is there, mapped out and presented for us, upon which to pass judgment. It is a delight to the mind simply to read the discussions on this point as they are presented by the various writers.

Who does not like the subject of "Origins"? In the old days there was not much satisfaction in discussing it because the material was not there in sufficient amount for men to argue about it. Anthropology and comparative psychology had not come into existence as real sciences and brought together their mass of concrete facts to be sifted over and interpreted. Both the biologist and the sociologist are able now to coöperate with the ethical philosopher in working upon this most fascinating problem.

There is, too, the metaphysical element which is naturally absorbing to the philosopher. Along with the problem of origins goes the other fascinating issue as to how ethical questions are connected with the totality, how they are linked in their final stage with the last and universal cosmic problem. We can actually see the writer putting on his armor in the glow of excitement for the fray as the issue is raised, in the language of Carneri: "*Ist, und in wie ferne ist bei einem consequentdurchgeführten Determinismus eine ethische Weltanschauung möglich?*"⁴ Once throw this down as a gauntlet, some of the best and sharpest thinking of which the human mind is capable will be called forth at once. Perhaps men are as wide apart on this point to-day, in spite of all the acute discussion, as they were one hundred years ago. We can, however, take delight and satisfaction in the keenness with which it has been argued and the profound thinking which it has elicited.

³ See Theodor Elsenhans. 1894.

⁴ B. Carneri, "*Grundlegung der Ethik*." 1881, Einleitung.

Furthermore, we shall also be willing enough to recognize the splendid work which has been done in the application of the new or more advanced doctrines of evolution to the problems of ethics. However much men may still disagree on these matters, or whatever may be their disappointment over evolutionary ethics, they must frankly admit that the discussion itself which has been aroused, has been worthy of some of the best intellect this world has ever produced.

Some of the treatises on ethics, therefore, which have been given forth within the last generation, have been monumental in importance, while large numbers of them evince a scholarship and philosophical insight of which the human race need never feel ashamed.

On the other hand, we insist, few and rare would be the instances where the same degree of insight or thoroughness is manifest from the beginning to the end of the work. Over and over again we become aware of a certain "let-down" the instant the writer passes from the more abstract or metaphysical elements of his problem to those which are concrete. The writers seem to be on the heights where they breathe most freely, when treating of the Freedom of the Will, the Idea of the Good, the Meaning of Conscience, the Concept of Duty, or anything which brings in "*Weltanschauung*." As a sheer matter of pleasure in watching a splendid fight on the intellectual side, one might find inexhaustible satisfaction in reading the disputes between the representatives of the standpoints of "Utilitarianism" and "Self-realization." It fairly makes one think of the battle in the skies between the angels, as outlined in magnificent language in "Paradise Lost," by John Milton.

When, however, it comes to the prosaic topic of duties or virtues and how to classify them, we are down from the "heights," on a level which the ethical philosopher half unconsciously regards as commonplace. It would seem in many instances as if he dealt with it or introduced it as a topic, not because he wanted to or cared to do so; but because he had to do it in order to make his work a complete treatise on ethics. The suggestion that animals are made

up of "men, quadrupeds," etc., is sure to come to one's mind. Instead of taking up the topic in a thorough and systematic way, going into it with acute analysis, it is oftentimes as if the author merely walked around it, looked at it here and there from various sides, touched it in spots and then let it go again.

What shall one say, for instance, of an example to be found in the treatise entitled, "The Principles of Morals," by Thomas Fowler and John Matthias Wilson—men who have held high positions and taken high rank, one may suppose, in the world of philosophy? At the latter part of chapter III, part II, under the title "Resentful Feelings," we come upon the following sentence: "Before bringing this long chapter to a close, it seems necessary to add a few remarks on the virtue or duty of veracity."⁵ To come upon language of that kind in such a place is almost enough to make one gasp. He does not imply that the subject necessarily *belongs* at that precise point. He simply indicates that inasmuch as the topic must come in somewhere, this may be as good a place for it as any other. And yet the work as a whole, by its very title deals with "Principles." Now what we should like to know is how this duty or virtue of veracity fits in with the whole system of duties, and what position it has in such a system. This surely is what we have a right to ask from a treatise which deals with principles. It is not enough simply to talk it over a little in connection with "Resentful Feelings." This criticism does not imply that the work of Fowler and Wilson did not have great value, and that there was not much fine and subtle thinking to be found in it. The flaw pointed out is one that tends to pervade many other treatises as well.

In so many words, it would seem as if writers on ethical philosophy had not yet in this special phase of their problem passed beyond the conventional or the traditional stage. In discussions as to the origin of conscience or the "nature of the good," they have taken tremendous strides forward,

⁵ Fowler and Wilson, "Principles of Morals." 1894, Part II, ch. III, p. 161.

introducing new phraseology, beginning with the problems, as it were, all over again, opening out new vistas which promise much for the future. We feel that in such directions ethics has taken a great new start.

In a work like that on "The Science of Ethics," by Leslie Stephen, there is really a big step taken in advance by the mere coinage of such a phrase as "social tissue." We may not like it or we may be convinced that it led the writer into mistaken theories. But at any rate, by the use of such a term he shook himself free from a mass of entangling language, and was able to take a new start for himself. His treatise will always surely rank as a landmark in "Evolutionary" ethics. He struck out from the old-fashioned, conventional utilitarianism into new pathways.

But, on the other hand, one is rather disappointed when he comes to the consideration of the virtues, in his chapter on "Contents of the Moral Law," that he should have gone back for his classification to a period over two thousand years ago. He is satisfied with "something which corresponds to the ancient doctrine of the cardinal virtues." "It is a method," he says, "which will be sufficient for our purposes."⁶ Surely this is disappointing. With all his acuteness and far reaching insight, we might have hoped for new pathways here also. Why could he not have begun over again at this point, as he did with the doctrine of utilitarianism? After two thousand years of effort, is it possible that we cannot do better in classifications than to fall back on Plato? The quantity of the material by which to arrange a new system of virtues or duties is tenfold greater than it was in those early days. It has increased in scope quite as much as the material in the science of biology.

No matter what new suggestions Leslie Stephen may have thrown out in his discussion of this topic, it is disheartening to read the conventional titles of the four classes: I, Courage; II, Temperance; III, Truth; IV, Social Virtues.

⁶ Sir Leslie Stephen, "Science of Ethics." 1882, ch. V, *Contents of the Moral Law*.

In a treatise that gives so much new material for thinking, we do not quite like to meet with language that speaks of "a method which will be sufficient for our purposes." We ask for the best method, one sufficient for *all* purposes, a new system, in keeping with his advanced standpoint as an "evolutionary utilitarian."

The fact of it is, we feel that he simply was not especially interested in this part of his subject, and that is why he found it easier to fall back on a traditional division, in order to pass over to other problems as soon as possible.

One notices that Professor Mezes has taken just about the same course in his "Ethics, Descriptive and Explanatory," published only five years ago. Under the topic of "Objective Morality," we come upon the same old familiar headings which our great-grandfathers would have recognized; "Courage," "Temperance," "Benevolence," "Justice," "Wisdom," "Welfare."⁷ Interesting and valuable as his comments may be on each of these virtues, one cannot help saying to one's self: It was the beginning of a new century, a time for a new start; why would it not have been worth while to launch out with a new classification, escaping by this means from the entanglement of traditional or conventional language?

In so many words, in a large number of these treatises, the department of objective ethics is disappointing. There would seem to be a falling off in originality on the part of the writers. They do not appear to enter heart and soul into the issues, nor to grapple with them with the same degree of thoroughness which they display elsewhere.

What if modern psychology were to retain the classifications of bygone times in such detail? How would it seem if, for example, the men at work in that sphere of research were still to divide their books into "Part I, The Body; Part II, The Soul"? What if they retained the conventional divisions usual with Plato or Aristotle? Surely it would make us smile. The vast amount of material which has been gathered

⁷ S. E. Mezes, "Ethics." 1901, chs. X-XV.
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by their efforts has called for a new division or a new system. And with this they have developed a new nomenclature. The psychologist of two hundred years ago probably would be bewildered in the extreme in trying to make out the terminology, if he were to come back to life to-day and begin to peruse treatises on that subject published within the last generation. The only answer to him would be: We have passed beyond your divisions, because we have a quantity of material of which you knew nothing at all; we cannot divide animals into "human beings and quadrupeds," etc.; your divisions answered for your day, but not for ours; we are starting in over again.

But the writer on ethics of two hundred years ago might come back and pick up treatises on the subject to which he had devoted himself, and feel quite at home with much of the phraseology. There are the same old headings of the virtues or duties, "Justice" and "Benevolence"; "Duties to One's Self" and "Duties to Others"; "Self-regarding Virtues" and "Social Virtues"; "Temperance," "Prudence" and "Wisdom." He might well say to himself: This is not so bad after all; I am fairly well at home here.

And yet as a matter of fact if the right kind of advance had been made in this particular section of the department of ethics, he ought not to feel at home here. The atmosphere should seem strange to him. We have acquired enough new material to begin over again with our classifications. Ethics is also entitled to its own new nomenclature.

The discouraging feature in all this is the lack of system that we have a right to expect in a sphere of effort which may be looked upon as a separate department of philosophy. In taking up a consideration of the duties or virtues there should be a definite reason why one begins with "Veracity," if that is to be a starting point. And the same would apply to any other topic if it were chosen at the outset in a treatment of this subject. What is the *principle* according to which these virtues or duties should be classified, we ask? Give us a system or table; tell us the one rule according to which you propose to unfold them. Why do you begin first

with the social virtues, or why do you start first with the self-regarding virtues? Better still, why do you have any such classification as the self and the social virtues? What is the reason that we cannot have a unity of method, a system here into which the parts fit together, just as we have in a treatise on psychology?

We ask that one topic follow another because it *ought* to do so, that one duty be treated "secondly," because according to a system it comes in the second place, and not in the third place.

Take again, for example, the series of "seven commandments" in the otherwise most valuable little "Manual of Ethics," by J. S. Mackenzie. In chapter XI, these are classified as a series of "Respects," for (1) Life, (2) Freedom, (3) Character, (4) Property, (5) Social Order, (6) Truth, (7) Progress.⁸ This is all very interesting and would make attractive reading in an old-fashioned essay on "The Commandments." But what are we to say in regard to the remarks with which paragraph IX opens? "I have made no great effort to reduce these commandments to system. It might be a good exercise for the student to work them out more in detail and show their relations to one another." It is just this kind of language that disturbs us. If a writer in ethical philosophy undertakes to introduce a series of commandments at all, has he a right to do it without having a "system"? Otherwise, how can his work rank as a philosophical treatise? Have we not as much right to demand system in these details as in the broader subdivisions of his main theme? A man is entitled to write an "Essay" on one or another phase of ethics, and talk around the subject in a miscellaneous way as much as he pleases. This is precisely what was done all his life by Ralph Waldo Emerson. But under those circumstances, he ought not to call his work a "Manual," or a "Treatise on Ethics," or refer to his work as "Ethical Philosophy." Whether it be a mere "Introduction to Ethics" or a "Treatise," we have a right to

⁸ J. S. Mackenzie, "Manual of Ethics." Third Edition, 1892, ch. XI.

expect thorough system so far as it goes. Whenever there is any kind of a classification, there should also be a unity to it.

All this only means that some of our best and most acute thinkers in ethics have not gone ahead with the same degree of originality, when they come to the particular phase of the classification of duties or virtues. Many of them have not been aroused as yet to the importance of the matter, because of their greater interest in the problem of origins or final ends. They revel in an analysis of the meaning of duty; but are inclined to be bored when it comes to the necessity of outlining the "Duties." Perhaps this is owing to the fact that it would take them into a realm of study to which they are less accustomed. It is hard for the philosopher to get out of his "den."

At the same time we insist that either he should let this phase of his problem alone, or else that he should deal with it with the same thoroughness that he displays in his discussion of "Origins" or "Final Ends." Far better, we should say, leave it out altogether, than make "no great effort to reduce it to system."

On the other hand, we must admit that when the venture is actually made in the effort to give a new classification, it is not always satisfactory. Here, for example, is an attempt on the part of an LL. D., F. R. S. of England—G. Gore, in his work, "The Scientific Basis of Morality." It has a promising and pretentious title. There is a hint in it that there is something better than moral "Philosophy," namely, moral "Science." "A new moral code is wanted," says the writer. And he proceeds to give one in the form of ten "Moral Rules," running as follows: (1) To obey all the laws of nature. (2) To do the greatest good. (3) To preserve our lives and health. (4) To do unto others as we would have them do unto us. (5) To continually improve ourselves and others. (6) To prefer truth to error. (7) To consider beforehand the consequences of our acts. (8) To estimate all things according to their real value and not sacrifice the greater to the less. (9) To proportion the

fixity of our belief to the scale of the evidence. (10) To acquire wisdom.⁹

This is all very interesting and entertaining. But if it be "science," then we should say at once by all means, in preference give us "philosophy." The analogy at once comes to the mind of the "men and quadruped" division of the animal kingdom. If there is anything in the world that is irritating it is to come upon a man who, because he is enthusiastic over the results of science, undertakes by means of these results to improve on the philosophers by *floundering in philosophy*.

If the new classification we are asking for is to be worked out, it must be done not by the biologist, nor by the physicist, but by the specialist in ethics.

In an earlier treatise published back about the middle of the nineteenth century on "The Elements of Morality," there is a distinction suggested in the preface, which is worthy of consideration. The writer is or was the well-known doctor of divinity, William Whewell, professor of moral philosophy in the University of Cambridge. In his work we have divisions and classifications and subdivisions to our heart's content. The book is devoted to this and nothing else. In the preface, however, he makes an apology for this, as if somehow he were a trifle ashamed of what he was doing, on the supposition that it was not quite in keeping with the dignity of the "chair" he occupied. He proposes, however, to draw the distinction between the elements of morality and moral philosophy. He points out a similar case in the science of geometry. The "elements" here, as he suggests, are made up of a "series of positive and definite propositions, deduced one from another in succession by rigorous reasoning, and all resting upon certain definitions and self-evident axioms." In contrast to this he calls attention to another class of problems: "Whence is the cogency of geometrical proof? What are the faculties by which we become aware of their truth?"¹⁰ and the like. These latter ques-

⁹ G. Gore, "Scientific Basis of Morality." 1899, ch. LX.

¹⁰ William Whewell, "Elements of Morality." 1845, Vol. I, Prefac

tions pertain, as he would imply, to the philosophy of geometry.

So it might be, according to Whewell, with the distinctions between the elements of morality and moral philosophy. The duties and the virtues would constitute the elements, the ground-work of material, like the propositions in mathematical science. The philosophy of the subject would have to do with the nature and the origin of conscience, the idea of the good, and so forth.

But after examining the efforts of Whewell, one cannot help feeling glad that the distinction did not win its way and prevail. We sigh for a little more "philosophy." We are carried too much into the commonplace with the feeling that we are reading the moralizing comments of an old-fashioned doctor of divinity, rather than the thorough work of a professor of Cambridge University.

It would be a deplorable misfortune if the classification of duties or virtues became an altogether separate department. We should miss the very *philosophical method* that we crave. Happily, later writers have not accepted Whewell's distinction. Most of them continue to bring the "elements" of morality and moral "philosophy" between the same covers as sections of one subject, which they call "Ethics." Whewell's work is on the shelf where it belongs.

When we come to consider the real source of the difficulty, we may find it perhaps in the fact that ethics has not yet shaken itself free from the utility aspect. It has been expected to serve as a handmaid in the cultivation or up-building of character. The old phraseology arose or was elaborated chiefly for the purpose of moral training. If the distinctions did not always have their start in this way, the selection was made in the process of time with this purpose in view. The preacher and the teacher have been the great factors in molding the language or fixing distinctions in moral philosophy.

Ethics is perhaps the last stronghold to give way, therefore, to the new spirit. It is only within quite recent times that the change occurred even in the great department of

psychology. The conventional distinctions in the latter science for long centuries have constituted some of the chief material for religious training. The two main subdivisions of body and soul have been absolutely essential for the purposes of the preacher.

Yet psychology has won its independence, while not interfering with the preacher in the work he aspires to do.

The first thing, therefore, for ethical philosophy to do is likewise to shake off the old traditions and begin all over again in the classification of the virtues and duties. It must rid itself of the "utility" connections and make its divisions or system according to the latest thinking or the most recent acquisitions of facts and experience, as we now possess them.

We do not mean to imply for an instant that the old-fashioned distinctions are to be despised. On the contrary, they will survive for utility purposes forever, beyond any question outliving any new classifications we may happen to make just at this moment. Whatever is done at the present time in this direction must be provisional only.

Psychology, we assume, has passed beyond the distinction of soul and body in the traditional sense. It divides or arranges the psychic experiences in quite a different way. Yet the religious teacher will continue to use the old forms of speech and be justified in using them, we venture to say, in all ages to come. In developing what he would call spiritual culture, these exactly answer his purposes and nothing else will take their place. For him they have a true significance by the emphasis they give to the peculiar ideal he is striving for.

So, too, the old-fashioned precepts in morals, the conventional divisions of the virtues and the duties, the distinctions between self-love and self-sacrifice, duties to self and duties to others, all these answer the purpose of the teacher whose work is moral training or character-culture, far better than any new classification might do. These rules and precepts also have a true significance for his purposes. They are much the best material for him to use in working upon the feelings of the people whom he is seeking to influence. It does not

matter with him if one rule crosses another. He does not have to be worried about the "men and quadruped" analogy.

If, for instance, moral training ever becomes a department of our public schools, we venture to assert that the old-time distinctions will be used, in spite of anything that may be done in the opposite direction by the ethical philosopher. The precepts to which we refer are the kind which have grown up out of human experience; and they express in a general way what has been learned through that experience. It will do no harm if the young are taught the maxim of Shakespeare: "Let mercy season justice," whether or no it be correct philosophy.

If the writers on ethics, therefore, will once shake themselves free from these traditions and deal with the same freedom that has been exercised by the psychologist, a great new step will be taken; and we shall be soon rid of the crude or unsystematic classifications of the virtues and duties we meet with in many of the well-known treatises.

It is distressing when, on turning from the work of the school teacher in moral training to that of the university professor, we still find the primeval distinction based on the sentiment of sweet Portia about "mercy seasoning justice." How anyone can clearly and fully define the word "justice" from the philosophical standpoint without making it include "mercy," almost passes comprehension.

Yet if we take up some of the ablest treatises we may suddenly come upon the old division between the duties of benevolence and the duties of justice. If I see a stranger actually dying of hunger, for instance, and there is bread in my hands, "justice" permits me to pass by. But the duty of "benevolence" requires me to share my bread with the starving. If that were the case, whence all the glow of feeling or sentiment through all ages for the word justice?

Even Professor Paulsen, in his able and fascinating treatise, "*System der Ethik*," still retains something of the old-fashioned classification. He has not quite rid himself of the desire of being the moral teacher, or the wish to do a little preaching while he is working out his system. With him,

too, we have the division between "*Gerechtigkeit*" and "*Nächstenliebe*."¹¹ It is on a par with the division of the old-time psychology between body and soul. It is sentimental, but not philosophical. The preacher will continue his injunction in beautiful language, "Do justice and love mercy." But the philosopher must see that we are dealing here with two phases of one virtue.

We have no objection if the ethical philosopher wishes to preach good morals. He may be peculiarly adapted to do this. But it should be done in a separate treatise and not form a part of a *System der Ethik*. The latter is no place to moralize against suicide or dueling. It simply rests with him to place these types of conduct in their proper classification as a part of his system of virtues and vices.

Not long ago the writer of this article undertook to bring together a large number of definitions of justice, chiefly from treatises on ethics. The work was done with considerable pains in the hope that by such a sifting process he would discover the kernel of meaning in this word, as it is commonly employed by scholars.

But the outcome was anything but encouraging. In fact it was amazing to discover the confusion of language in regard to this subject, and the differences of opinion in connection with it. And yet, on the other hand, the disposition on the part of most of these writers has been to hold on tightly to the word, as if they would be at sea in case they had to abandon it. We may, nevertheless, come to the conclusion that ethical philosophy will be obliged to drop the word justice from its nomenclature, precisely as we may have to abandon the conventional precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," when desiring to use precise terminology.

Take, for example, the observation of J. S. Mackenzie in his "Manual of Ethics." "A just arrangement of society may be briefly defined as being one in which the ideal life of all its members is promoted as efficiently as possible."¹² Place

¹¹ Friedrich Paulsen, "System der Ethik." 1899.

¹² J. S. Mackenzie, "Manual of Ethics." Part II, ch. X, par. 2.

this over against the celebrated formula of justice from Herbert Spencer: "Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he interferes not with the equal freedom of any other man."¹³ In these two standpoints we are as wide as the poles asunder.

The fact of it is, Spencer was trying to be preacher and agitator, while working out an ethical philosophy. It vitiates his entire treatise. He surely was in a position to make a new division and give us a new nomenclature. The best he could do was to torture us with "Egoism" and "Altruism." But it is a very superficial division. We are back to the old point about "mercy seasoning justice." The chapters on "Negative Benevolence" and "Positive Benevolence" have plenty of interesting moralizing, and may be helpful in many ways for the teacher or the preacher. But we cannot help feeling that the great evolutionist was in the old rut nevertheless. The genius for originality which was so conspicuous in his early work appears to have failed him here.

Sidgwick was surely right when he said: "The attempt to map out the region of justice reveals to us a sort of margin or dim borderland, tenanted by expectations which are not quite claims and with regard to which we do not feel quite sure whether justice does or does not bid us satisfy them."¹⁴ One might add that Professor Sidgwick had a way of discovering a "margin or dim borderland" to a good many subjects in ethics.

In fact the whole distinction between self-regarding duties and duties to others seems anything but philosophical in the light of modern investigation, modern sociology, or modern psychology. It is on a par with the conventional division of the self into body and soul, as if there were two halves which could be treated distinctly and dealt with separately and then put together once more as a unity.

Surely every duty that one owes to one's self is also a duty to others. And the duties we owe to others have refer-

¹³ Herbert Spencer, "Principles of Morals." Part IV, 1891, ch. VI.

¹⁴ H. Sidgwick, "Methods of Ethics." Second Edition. Book III, ch. V.

ence also to the self and what is due to the self. We cannot split up the province of duty in this way.

If the division is to be made at all, then the writer of this article is inclined to think that the proper method has been pursued by Höffding. Instead of simply separating the duties or virtues into two classes in this way, he divides his whole work, or the whole province of ethics, into two parts, "*Individuelle Ethik*" and *Soziale Ethik*." ¹⁵ Whether this is legitimate may be disputed. But at any rate it is far preferable to the other method, provided any distinction of this nature is to be retained.

Professor Mackenzie has an admirable "note on rules of conduct" in which he says: "Experience teaches me that most of those who take up the study of ethics, expect to find in it some cut-and-dried formulas for the guidance of their daily lives." ¹⁶ He is right. And it has been very hard for writers in this department not to try to do something to gratify such a desire.

Yet we insist that treatises on ethics, or "systems of ethics," are not the place where one should go to find formulas for the guidance of one's daily life. Such formulas should exist, to be sure, and there ought to be books where one could find them. But they belong to a separate province. Joseph Rickaby, S. J., told the exact truth in his "Moral Philosophy," when he said: "There is no authentic copy of the moral law printed, framed, and hung up by the hand of nature in the inner sanctuary of every human heart. Man has to learn his duties as he learns the principles of health, the laws of mechanics, the construction and navigation of vessels, the theorems of geometry or any other art or science. And he is just as likely to go wrong, and has gone wrong, as grievously in his judgment on moral matters as on any other subject of human knowledge." ¹⁷ It was a great step forward in scientific method in dealing with ethics or moral philosophy,

¹⁵ Harald Höffding, "Zweite Auflage der Deutschen Ausgabe." 1901.

¹⁶ "Manual of Ethics," ch. XI.

¹⁷ Joseph Rickaby, S. J., "Moral Philosophy." Third Edition, 1892, ch. VI, sec. 2.

when this fact was frankly admitted. Men must go to work to discover the practical rules of life and shape them in simple form so that people can use them. Many of these are in proverbs; others are in wisdom gems from the religious literature of the world; still others in the world's poetry. But the classification of duties or virtues to be worked out in a treatise on ethical philosophy should not be of this nature.

It is interesting to see how Martineau struggled with this problem in his "Types of Ethical Theory." He certainly made a desperate effort to work in a new direction through his classification of "the Springs of Action." But one feels after all that what he has to say is not good psychology. The ethical philosopher, though he shall keep his department distinct, should at least be acquainted with the latest results both of psychology and the social sciences. He requires this for his purposes. The classifications of Martineau seem rather stiff and stilted, although it is interesting to see how he was moving in the right direction in the effort to find one principle out of which his classification should flow, or a basis of unity for his division in the rules he gives: "Every action is right which in presence of a lower principle follows a higher; every action is wrong, which in presence of a higher principle, follows a lower."¹⁸

We are quite aware that there may be a number of conspicuous exceptions to what we have been saying. Surely not all writers are equally confusing on this point. So, too, we may have been sharpest in our criticism on some of those who are the most acute in much of their reasoning on other phases of the ethical problem.

At the same time, we should certainly want to mention one instance where a great writer has taken a new start in a most encouraging way. It is the one who seems to have made every subject he has dealt with luminous with new suggestions and new methods of treatment. Of all the treatises on ethics with which the present writer is acquainted,

¹⁸ James Martineau, "Types of Ethical Theory." Third Edition, Vol. II, Book I, ch. VI, par. 15.

not one has done so much for a better classification of the duties or virtues as the "*Ethik*," by Wilhelm Wundt.

First of all Wundt seems to have struck out with a new phraseology. It may be charged that much of what he says implies the old distinctions. But a great deal has been accomplished simply by presenting the subject in new language or in different nomenclature. The chapters entitled "*Die sittlichen Zwecke*," "*Die sittlichen Motive*," and "*Die sittlichen Normen*"¹⁹ have impressed the writer of this article as being the most suggestive for a new classification of virtues and duties, so far as his reading goes, of anything that we have had since the time of Immanuel Kant. It is, to be sure, a beginning and nothing else. One can only hope that the workers in ethics in our great universities will take courage from this venture on the part of Wundt and press on and bring this branch of ethics up to a like rank and dignity with the discussions on the origin of conscience and the idea of the good.

If there is any point to the main contention I have been making, then it opens up the question whether the teachers and writers who deal with ethics should not make a greater effort to get together for mutual conference. Ought they not to be definitely organized and meet in annual convention so as to take up some of these problems in a more direct way among themselves? By this method might they not come to a clearer understanding on some of these disputed points and bring all these departments of their main theme up to the level of the most advanced standpoints of modern thinking and research? Would this not be a means of doing away with the unevenness which characterizes the chapters in many of our ethical treatises?

Before men come out in the presence of the public with the results of their work, ought they not to sift the material down and go over it thoroughly in a systematic way among themselves by discussion and argument? Has not the time come for an annual ethical congress? By this is not meant

¹⁹ Wilhelm Wundt, "*Ethik*." 1886, III, 2, 3, and 4.

a meeting where men get together in order to address the outside world on subjects of this nature, with any hope or wish of attracting the attention of the public at large to their subject. On the contrary, it ought to be limited strictly to the specialists; and these men should talk to themselves and nobody else.

One cannot help feeling that if a congress of this nature were started, if the university men and writers in this important department were organized for conference, about the first subject they would be called upon to sift down and overhaul, would be just this classification of duties and virtues. Nothing takes the place of personal conference and discussion, where men talk strictly among themselves with no thought or care with regard to the ear of the public outside.

What has been said in this article concerning the confusion and unsatisfactoriness in the classification of duties and virtues may also apply to other features or modern treatises on Ethics. Writers on ethics would find this out soon enough if they came together in an organized body for annual conference. Ethics is now a subject of enough importance to authorize such an independent association. And one can but hope that it will come ere long. By all means let this great department in which so much has been accomplished within the last hundred years take the position of dignity to which it is entitled.

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